

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66604

DRAFTED BY AF/E:ESHIPPY:SM

APPROVED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE

EUR/WE:WHMANGER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 124929

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO DAR ES SALAAM
KINSHASA BUJUMBURA KIGALI BUKAVU FROM NAIROBI 223 MAY 75:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 4245

FROM MACFARLANE AND LUCIUS

FOLLOWING HAND CARRIED FROM KIGOMA BY CEO RONALD B. JOHNSTON
INTENDED FOR TRANSMISSION BY AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (SMUTS SMITH HUNTER)

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS

1. EVENTS OF NIGHT MAY 19/20 AT GOMBI STREAM NATIONAL PARK
SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

2. SOMETIME AFTER 2200 (MAY 19) GROUP OF ARMED MEN (30-40) LANDED
FROM WOODEN BOAT AT PARK RANGER STATION NEAR GOMBI RESEARCH CENTER
(GRC) CIRCA 30-FOOT LONG BOAT DESCRIBED AS OF TYPE FABRICATED BY
LAKE--SIDE BOAT BUILDERS (DOW-SHAPED AND APPEARED TO BE LIKE WATER
TAXIS COMMON TO AREA AND POWERED BY OUTBOARD ENGINE). INTRUDERS
CAPTURED TWO PARK RANGERS AND FORCED ONE TO LEAD THEM TO GRC.

3. ACCORDING TO ONE AMCIT STUDENT AT GRC, BOAT BEARING ARMED PARTY
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ARRIVED AT CENTER ABOUT 23:40, CAPTURED NIGHT GUARD AND BEGAN
SEARCHING FOR FOREIGNERS. FIRST CAPTURED WAS EMILE WHO APPARENT-
LY ONLY STUDENT TO STILL HAVE LIGHTS ON. TAKEN ABOUT SAME TIME WAS
FEMALE TANZANIAN PARK WARDEN (SENIOR TANGOV OFFICIAL IN PARK AT TIME)

WHO WAS RELEASED UNHARMED WHEN ARMED BAND LEFT.

4. AFTER FORCEFULLY QUESTIONING CAPTIVES NEAR GRC'S COMMON ROOM AND PILLAGING NEARBY SUPPLY AND ADMIN BUILDING, INTRUDERS FANNED OUT UP STEEP AND THICKLY WOODED SLOPE BEHIND GROUP OF ADMIN BUILDINGS LOCATED AT WATER'S EDGE. IN CONCENTRATED SEARCH FOR STUDENTS (BEFORE AND DURING THIS TIME, ARMED MEN WERE HEARD TO YELL OUT "WHERE ARE THE FOREIGNERS" IN SWAHILI) THEY BROKE INTO HUT WHERE STEVE SMITH WAS SLEEPING.. WHEN SMITH SCREAMED FOR HELP CARRIE HUNTER, (WHO WAS SLEEPING IN NEARBY HUT) CAME TO SMITH'S AID AND WAS CAPTURED BY THOSE WHO HAD TAKEN SMITH.

5. MEANWHILE MOST SLEEPING STUDENTS, NOW AWAKE BY YELLING AND SSCREAMS, CAME OUT OF THEIR HUTS TO INVESTIGATE. WHEN MAGNITUDE OF INCURSION WAS ASCERTAINED, THEY RETREATED BACK INTO THE WOODS AND BUSH TO HIDE. NIGHT MAY 19/20 WAS VERY DARK AND, FOR EXAMPLE, ONE ARMED INTRUDER CAME WITHIN TEN FEET OF ONE STUDENT WITHOUT SEEING HER ALTHOUGH HE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY HAD FLASHLIGHTS.

6. DURING LATER PART OF BAND'S STAY AT GRC, THEY BEGAN HURRIEDLY REMOVING ITEMS OF USE TO THEM. CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF FOOD, FUEL AND CLOTHING WAS TAKEN, ALTHOUGH MANY THINGS WERE DROPPED IN THEIR HURRY TO TAKE THEM DOWN TO BOAT. SMITH'S ROOM WAS STRIPPED OF NEARLY EVERYTHING (INCLUDING HIS MATTRESS) BUT ATTACKERS LEFT PASSPORT AND BILLFOLD CONTAINING TANZANIAN SHILLINGS..

7. AFTER BINDING UP THEIR PRISONERS, ARMED BAND LEFT GRC ABOUT 0100 OR ABOUT 80-90 MINUTES AFTER ARRIVAL. AT END OF STAY THEY BROKE INTO GRC BOAT HOUSE AND STOLE CIRCA 13 FOOT BOSTON WHALER WHICH THEY TOWED BEHIND THEIR BOAT. WHALER DESCRIBED AS BEING MADE OF WHITE FIBREGLASS AND POWERED BY OUTBOARD THAT IS DISTINGUISHED BY LONG MAKESHIFT WOODEN HANDLE WHICH IS USED FOR STEERING.

8. FOLLOWING UPDATES FOREGOING ON BASIS OF MAY 23 HELICOPTER VISIT
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BY MACFARLANE TO GRS, AND DRAWS ON CONVERSATIONS WITH BRYCESON, GOODALL, PARK RANGER ETHA LOHAI, AND STUDENTS RICHARD BARNES (UK), LARRY GOLDMAN AND HELEN NEELY. NOTE: ALL ARE WELL AND IN REASONABLY GOOD SPIRITS WHILE TWO ARE IN KIGOMA, ANN PIERCE AND PHYLLIS LEE. ALL RPT ALL NON-TANZANIANS ARE EXPECTED IN KIGOMA BY END OF AFTERNOON MAY 23. MOST PLAN TO GO ON TO DAR ES SALAAM TO ASSEMBLE RESEARCH MATERIAL GATHERED AT GRS.

9. GOODALL, BRYCESON, AND ALL OTHERS INTERVIEWED FIRMLY PERSUADED THAT BAND CAME OVER FROM ZAIRE AND IS CONNECTED WITH LONG-SIMMERING INSURGENCY ON OPPOSITE SIDE OF LAKE.. EVIDENCE IS PERSUASIVE. MEMBERS OF PARTY ARMED WITH MISCELLANY OF WEAPONS, INCLUDING SOME AUTOMATICS, AND REPORTEDLY DRESSED IN FAIRLY UNIFORM KHAKI OUTFITS;

NO INSIGNIA REPORTED. THEY SPOKE FRENCH, SOME SWAHILI AND ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED BANTU LANGUAGE WHICH IS VARIOUSLY SURMISED TO HAVE BEEN LINGALA OR KIBEMBE. ESTIMATES OF SIZE OF BAND RANGE FROM 20-60 (AROUND 30-40 IS MOST COMMONLY GIVEN FIGURE). MEMBERS OF BAND WHEN SPEAKING TO AFRICANS REFERRED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO MULELE AND ONCE, AFTER ASKING WHERE WHITE ("WAZUNGU") WERE LOCATED, SAID THEY HAD COME TO REDEEM THE COUNTRY FROM FOREIGN EXPLOITATION.

10. PERHAPS MOST STRIKING NEW PIECE OF INFORMATION CAME FROM NIGHT-WATCHMAN FNU VENUS WHO SAID HE WAS ASKED BY ONE OF FIRST RAIDERS TO REACH GRS TO POINT OUT THE LOCAL COMMUNICATION FACILITIES. TOLD THERE WERE NONE, AND ASKED WHAT THEY WERE NEEDED FOR, MEMBER OF BAND SAID HE WANTED IT TO "SEND A MESSAGE TO NYERERE" (KUPIGA SIMU KWA NYERERE). IN THAT CASE, THE LATTER SAID THE MESSAGE WOULD HAVE TO BE SENT BY OTHER MEANS. I QUIZZED NIGHT-WATCHMAN INTENSIVELY IN SWAHILI ON THIS POINT, AND FOUND HIS ACCOUNT PERSUASIVE AND COHERENT.

11. BRYCESON, GOODALL AND STUDENTS ALSO REPORTED THAT A FORMER GOMBE EMPLOYEE, NASSIBU ALMASI, FIRED THREE YEARS AGO, HAS REMAINED IN KIGOMA SINCE THEN, REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH "MULELISTS" ON ZAIRE SIDE, AND HAS MOVED BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN KIGOMA AND SOUTH KIVU AREA. NASSIBU, WHOSE BROTHER ALSO WORKED FOR GRS, WAS RECENTLY DETAINED BY KIGOMA POLICE BUT ESCAPED ON MAY 16. GOODALL SPECULATED THAT NASIBU AND BROTHER, WHO KNOW GOMBE AREA INTIMATELY COULD WELL HAVE ASSISTED PARTY IN ORGANIZING RAID.

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12. IT STILL UNCLEAR WHETHER OR HOW SERIOUSLY MEMBERS OF PARTY SOUGHT GOODALL AS POTENTIAL HOSTAGE. ON ONE HAND, SEVERAL OF AFRICAN STAFF STATE THAT LEADERS OF BAND REPEATEDLY ASKED WHERE THEY COULD FIND LEADER OF GRS PROJECT BUT WERE THWARTED BY STAFF MEMBERS WHO CONSISTENTLY PROFESSED THAT THERE WERE NO OTHER NON-TANZANIANS BESIDES THOSE FOUR ALREADY SEIZED. ON OTHER HAND GIVEN EVIDENCE THAT RAID WAS PRE-PLANNED AND QUITE WELL ORGANIZED OPERATION, IT IS SURPRISING THAT MEMBERS OF PARTY HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED ON PRECISE LOCATION WHERE GOODALL COULD BE FOUND.

13. WHETHER OR NOT GOODALL, AS SENIOR AND WORLD-RENOINED RESEARCHER MARRIED TO HIGH-LEVEL GOVT OFFICIAL, WAS INTENDED AS THE MAIN PRIZE, IT NOW SEEMS REASONABLY CERTAIN THAT BAND WAS SPECIFICALLY SEEKING CAPTURE OF EXPATRIATE STUDENTS. THAT CONCLUSION REINFORCED BY FACT THAT RAIDERS DEBATED WHETHER TO TAKE RANGER LOHAI, AND DECIDED AGAINST DOING SO ONLY WHEN CONVINCED SHE WAS TANZANIAN AND NOT BLACK AMERICAN. LINDSTROM UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, TERRORISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE124929
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/E:ESHIPPY:SM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750188-0514
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197505104/baaaaalcb.tel
Line Count: 161
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <16 OCT 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: CASC, PINS, ACOM, NL, US, TZ, CG, (SMUTS, BARBARA), (SMITH, KENNETH STEVE), (HUNTER, CARRIE)
To: THE HAGUE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006